



City of Evansville Police Department Media Release



For Immediate Release:

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For More Information Contact:

Chief Scott McElroy
608-882-2299

Recently, a “Grandparent scam” was reported to the Evansville Police Department. The con artist preyed upon the elderly in our community, and we are working to inform and educate everyone on how these scams work and who are often targeted.

The Grandparent Scam:

A Grandparents scam is when someone calls or emails claiming to be your grandchild or loved one. The caller claims they are in trouble and needs you to help them by sending money right away.

The caller will usually begin by greeting you with “Hi Grandma/Grandpa” or something similar. Sometimes, instead of the “grandchild” making the phone call, or sending a fake email, the con artist pretends to be an arresting police officer, a lawyer, a doctor at a hospital, or some other person.

Phone call scams are often made late at night or early in the morning when most people aren’t thinking that clearly. Usually, the fake grandchild claims to be traveling in another state or a foreign country and has gotten into a bad situation, like being arrested, getting in a car accident, etc., and needs money wired ASAP. The scammer will also ask to keep the request confidential.

Scammers usually pressure people to wire money through commercial money transfer companies like Western Union or Money Gram because wiring money is the same as sending cash. The chances of recovery are slim to none and most often the funds are irretrievable.

What to do if you have been scammed:

It is recommended that you immediately contact your local police department or sheriff’s office if you think you’ve been victimized or a con artist has tried to scam

money from you. Time is critical and law enforcement needs to get involved as soon as possible.

How to avoid being victimized in the first place:

- Resist the pressure to act quickly.
- Always contact your child, grandchild or another family member to determine whether or not the call is legitimate.
- Never wire money based on a request made over the phone or in an e-mail, especially to another state or overseas. Wiring money is like giving cash, once you send it, it's gone.
- Always be suspicious, and report the conversation immediately to your local law enforcement agency.

If you have any questions please contact:

Chief of Police Scott McElroy at 608-882-2299 ext. 22 or at s.mcelroy@ci.evansville.wi.gov

Or

Senior Citizen Liaison Officer Dave Wickstrum: 608-882-2288 ext. 48 or at d.wickstrum@ci.evansville.wi.gov

For additional information visit the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection for an explanation of the most common scams:

<https://datcp.wi.gov/Pages/Publications/SeniorsPhoneScams283.aspx>